

**WE CLAIM AS OUR INVENTION:**

1. A switching system, comprising:

at least one connecting unit for connecting subscriber terminals which are to be switched;

a signaling control unit for controlling a signaling network;

a switching control unit for controlling the switching system;

a switching network for implementing communication between the subscriber terminals and the connecting, signaling control, and switching control units of the switching system;

the switching control unit comprising a message distributor for distributing signaling messages for the signaling network and control messages for the connecting, signaling control, and switching control units of the switching system;

a coordination processor for implementing routing and zoning by actuating the message distributor and the signaling control unit ; and

the message distributor comprising an internal bus for directly connecting the signaling control unit to the switching network.

2. The switching system of claim 1 wherein the message distributor

has a switching network connecting unit for connecting the switching network;

a coordination processor connecting unit for connecting the co-ordination processor; and

a signaling connecting unit for connection of the signaling control unit, the internal bus connecting the switching network, coordination processor, and signaling connecting units to one another internally.

3. The switching system of claim 2 wherein the switching network connecting unit has a plurality of switching network subscriber line modules, the internal bus connecting the modules to one another.

4. The switching system of claims 2 wherein coordination processor connecting unit has a co-ordination processor subscriber line module.

5. The switching system of claim 2 wherein the signaling connecting unit has a plurality of signaling subscriber line modules, the internal bus connecting the modules to one another.

6. The switching system of claim 4 wherein the coordination processor subscriber line module has two I bus modules with associated memory modules and two co-ordination processor interface modules for implementing a physical interface to the co-ordination processor.

7. The switching system of claim 5 wherein the signaling subscriber line modules each have two I bus modules with associated memory modules and two signaling interface modules for implementing a physical interface to the signaling control unit.

8. The switching system of claim 3 wherein the switching network subscriber line modules each have eight I bus modules with associated memory modules and eight switching network interface modules for implementing a physical interface to the switching network.

9. The switching system of claim 6 wherein the I bus modules comprise:

a processor core unit for carrying out data processing;

a RAM interface unit for implementing an interface to a memory module with random memory access;

a ROM interface unit for implementing an interface to a memory module with read only access; and

an I bus interface unit for implementing an interface for the internal bus.

10. The switching system of claims 6 wherein the I bus modules and at least some of the coordination processor, signaling and switching network interface modules are implemented in an ASIC.

11. The switching system of claim 1 wherein the internal bus comprises a packet-oriented serial bus.

12. The switching system of claims 1 wherein a data rate in the internal bus is switched over.

13. A method for operating a switching system, comprising the steps of:

- connecting subscriber terminals which are to be switched with at least one connecting unit of the switching system;
- controlling a signaling network with a signaling control unit;
- controlling the switching system with a switching control unit;
- implementing communication between the subscriber terminals and the connecting, signaling control, and switching control units of a switching system with a switching network;
- distributing signaling messages with a message distributor of the switching control unit for the signaling network and control messages for the connecting, signaling control, and switching control units of the switching system;
- implementing routing and zoning with a coordination processor by actuating the message distributor in the signaling control unit; and
- directly connecting the signaling control unit to the switching network with an internal bus of the message distributor.